

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Early Years

Characteristics of the Elementary School Child

Handout

The following are generalizations about how the elementary aged child behaves:

AGE 6

1. High activity level.
2. Boisterous play and verbal aggressiveness continues.
3. Much more ready to tease than to be teased, name calling, etc.
4. Enjoy putting things together, making things, and cooking.
5. Tend to be clumsy and to dawdle.
6. Easily upset if adult does not drop everything and come to help him/her when requested.
7. Almost always eating, particularly after school.
8. May have to fight to get up and dress for school.
9. Needs to be the center of things, first to win.
10. Assertive, bossy, extremely sensitive to real or imagined slights.
11. Very free with his/her opinions and advice.
12. Often at opposition with mother. "I hate you. You are mean. You are stupid."
13. Father is often the preferred parent at this time.
14. Relates to other children in the family often with competition.
15. Movement toward like-sexed friends.

AGE 7

1. Relative quiet time.
2. Reflective and serious.
3. Consolidation of reasoning ability.
4. Will show moods of brooding, pensiveness, sadness, and negativity.
5. Increased sense of self with a heightened sensitivity to the reactions of others.
6. Shame is a common emotion.
7. Reluctant to expose his ego to failure and criticism.
8. Worries about people liking him/her.
9. Politeness and consideration toward adults.
10. May relate better to siblings.
11. But, the closer the siblings are to same age, larger chances of fights and quarrels.
12. Wants to know immediately how well he/she has performed.
13. Less talkative, less impulsive, less self-centered, less confident, more sensitive.
14. Friends are extremely important.

Characteristics of the Elementary Child (Continued)

AGE 8

1. Has developed a judgmental attitude. Judges and appraises what is happening to him/her. Often asks "why."
2. Wants money to buy things to own. Is willing to barter and bargain.
3. Very interested in adult conversations.
4. Shows interest in children of other lands.
5. More self-confident.
6. Constantly trying himself/herself out on others.
7. Increased maturity.
8. Understanding differences between real and fantasy.
9. Particularly concerned in what his/her mother thinks and feels about him/her.
10. Dramatic play reflects stories he/she has read or heard.
11. Usually friendly and cooperative.
12. But, cooperation is associated with being "in the mood."

AGE 9

1. There is no sharp separation between 8 and 9 years old. Rather there is an increase in maturity and refinement of behavior.
2. Greater self-control.
3. May become so engrossed in his/her own activities that the child will forget time and meals.
4. Gives impression of calm, steadfastness and responsibility.
5. Accepts his/her own failures and mistakes with greater equanimity.
6. Better able to accept blame and responsibility for actions.
7. Increased awareness of sex and appropriate sexual behaviors.
8. Girls become very aware of how they look. May even throw temper tantrums saying, "I hate the way I look." "I hate this dress."
9. Girls begin to give parents hard time about clothes.
10. Boys must be constantly urged to bathe and wash. Don't seem to care if clothes are messy or not.
11. Less demanding of parent attention.
12. Best friends are important and of the same sex.
13. School is generally easier at this age.
14. The mechanics of reading and math have been mastered.
15. Writing is somewhat sloppy.
16. Inner-directed and self-motivated.

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TOYS FOR THE ELEMENTARY CHILD

FOR THE 6 TO 9 YEAR OLD:

This child wants things that are true to life and is interested in more vigorous play. Mixers that really mix. Iron that really irons. Small sewing machine. Doll house and furniture. Workbench with good tools and wood. Electric train. Metal construction sets. Toy typewriter. Printing set. Word and number games. More difficult puzzles. Computer. Gym apparatus. Athletic equipment. Roller and ice skates. Sled, skis. Bicycle.

AGE 10

1. A high point of balance and adapting that will not be achieved again for a long time.
2. Does on occasion get extremely angry, depressed or sad.
3. Mood seems quickly forgotten.
4. Much better about not losing their belongings.
5. Fears and anxiety are at an all time low.
6. Relations with parents, teachers, and peers are at an all time high.
7. Girls are slightly more advanced sexually.
8. Girl's bodies are already beginning to manifest roundness and softening of the contours.
9. Looks forward to growing up, marrying, having a career.
10. Growing up still a very romantic idea. This is a romantic age.
11. Likes his/her family. Likes family outings.
12. Goes out of their way to be helpful.
13. Spontaneous in show of affection and concern.
14. Girls usually moving in smaller groups than boys. Boys with boys; girls with girls.
15. Girls more often have hurt feelings with friends.
16. Good time for organizing group activities.
17. Mostly likes school and is a good student.
18. Enjoys the teacher reading to them. Likes books like Robinson Crusoe, Nancy Drew, Hardy Boys, mystery and adventure.
19. Lacks some of the stick-to-itiveness of the 9 year old.

AGE 11

1. Activity level shows a marked increase, has trouble keeping still.
2. Appetite seems to have increased several fold, "bottomless pit" time.
3. Manners are loud, boorish and rude.
4. Takes chances in traffic.
5. Wants to deal with adult world one last time and be a child.
6. Body growth increases. Becomes aware the child days are ending.
7. Often sensitivity, emotion, and argumentativeness are more evident at home than outside.
8. Needs to be handled with understanding but firmness.
9. Rather emotional and subject to outbursts of rage, peevishness and moodiness.
10. Responds with phrases, "Everything I do is wrong" and "You are always picking on me."
11. Needs to be noticed and cannot take indifference.
12. Will admit to faults only in a general way.
13. Dreams of becoming famous.
14. Critical of mother's judgment and father's temper.
15. Will attack if he/she feels another sibling is being favored.
16. Both boys and girls now admit to being interested in the opposite sex.
17. Many may find that school has become a problem. Specific in what they do not want to learn.

Characteristics of the Elementary Child (Continued)

Age 10 - 12

1. Outgoing, enthusiastic and generous.
2. Endowed with a sense of humor and can laugh at self. Can give and take humorous insults and practical jokes.
3. Beginning to assert that he or she is no longer a child.
4. Looks at self and family objectively.
5. Relates to peers and adults successfully.
6. Will respond to a strong teacher.
7. Aware of parents criticism toward them and in turn begin to humorously criticize parents.
8. Many girls are romantically interested in boys. Boys are becoming interested in girls, too.
9. Usually friends with someone most of the time.
10. Boys are more sports minded.
11. Claims to either love school or hate it.
12. Gradual turning inwards and preoccupation with self and self evaluation.
13. "Touchy". Goes to room when angry and upset. Worries and fears increase.
14. Sensitive to real and imagined slights. Agonizes over being too fat, too short, too weak.
15. Attempts by parents or adults and siblings is seen as prying.
16. Friends are usually the people who can keep secrets.
17. Some girls may begin dating. Boys are less interested in dating than girls.
18. Boys like to scare girls, push, grab books and run.
19. Movies are more frequent and telephoning too.
20. Favorite books are read and re-read.
21. Better organized.
22. Still wants and need parents direction.

For the 9 to 12 year old.

This child is interested in hobbies and crafts. They enjoy mental challenges. They enjoy magnets, telegraph sets, sound effects kits, and stamp collecting. In addition, they enjoy games based on history, geography, science, and art. Checkers, chess cribbage, more intricate construction sets and train equipment are also favorite games. Dart games, archery, target shooting, table tennis, basketball, handball, and softball are all games of skill that are greatly enjoyed by this age group.

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Kinder/Early Years

Teacher Note

Allowing a child to express his or her true feelings toward a new baby is important; yet protecting the infant from harm is also necessary. Anytime a new baby brother or sister comes into a family, the preschool child already present is going to have a reaction that may not be entirely favorable. Sibling rivalry cannot be eliminated; it can only be minimized.

1. Have the class read "Do You Mind Sharing My Love?" in this activity. Ask students to react to the story verbally or in writing. Compare the reaction to how a child might feel when a new baby comes home.
2. Have the students brainstorm and list on the chalkboard ways to decrease sibling rivalry. Compare the student-generated list to "What to Do About Sibling Rivalry: Some Helpful Hints for Parents" in this activity.
3. Have each student write a letter—as a parent—to a child already present in the home about the new baby that is joining the family.
4. After completing the previous activity, have each student prepare a Family Communication Sociogram or a family interaction map.

Give these instructions:

- a. In a circle on a piece of paper, place a symbol for each brother or sister with whom you communicate regularly. Place yourself in the center of this circle.

If you are an only child, use members of your family or friends with whom you communicate regularly.

- b. Draw a dark line (—) to those with whom you communicate well.
- c. Draw a zigzag line (VV) to those with whom you have a rivalry or conflict.
- d. If you can, put an X next to the person who seems to be causing the problems most often.
- e. On the other side of the page, list the people with whom you have rivalries or conflicts. Next to the name of each person, list the topics that cause the problems.
- f. List two positive steps you can take to improve the situation.